

Sūrah Al-Jumu'ah (The Friday)

This Sūrah is Madanī, and it has 11 verses and 2 sections

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

With the name of Allah, the All-Merciful, the Very-Merciful

Verses 1 - 8

يُسَبِّحُ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ الْمَلِكِ الْقُدُّوسِ الْعَزِيزِ
الْحَكِيمِ ﴿١﴾ هُوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ يَتْلُوا عَلَيْهِمْ
آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَإِنْ كَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ
لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ ﴿٢﴾ وَآخَرِينَ مِنْهُمْ لَمَّا يَلْحَقُوا بِهِمْ ۗ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ
الْحَكِيمُ ﴿٣﴾ ذَلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ
الْعَظِيمِ ﴿٤﴾ مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ حُمِّلُوا التَّوْرَةَ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَحْمِلُوهَا كَمَثَلِ
الْجِمَارِ يَحْمِلُ أَسْفَارًا بِئْسَ مَثَلُ الْقَوْمِ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ ۗ
وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٥﴾ قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ هَادُوا إِنْ زَعَمْتُمْ
أَنْكُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ لِلَّهِ مِنْ دُونِ النَّاسِ فَتَمَنُّوا الْمَوْتَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ
﴿٦﴾ وَلَا يَتَمَنَّوْنَهُ أَبَدًا بِمَا قَدَّمْتُمْ أَيْدِيهِمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالظَّالِمِينَ
﴿٧﴾ قُلْ إِنْ الْمَوْتَ الَّذِي تَفِرُّونَ مِنْهُ فَإِنَّهُ مُلَاقِيكُمْ ثُمَّ تُرَدُّونَ إِلَىٰ
عِلْمِ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٨﴾

All that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth

proclaim the purity of Allah, the Sovereign, the Supreme in Holiness, the All-Mighty, the All-Wise. [1] He is the One who raised amidst the unlettered people a messenger from among themselves who recites to them His verses, and purifies them, and teaches them the Book and the wisdom, although they were in an open error before. [2] And (this Messenger is sent also) to others of them who did not join them so far, and He is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise. [3] That is Allah's bounty that He gives to whomsoever He wills, and Allah is the Lord of the great bounty. [4] The example of those who were ordered to bear (the responsibility of acting upon) the Torah, then they did not bear it, is like a donkey that carries a load of books. Evil is the example of those who have rejected the verses of Allah. And Allah does not guide the wrongdoing people. [5] Say, "O those who are Jews, if you claim that you are the friends of Allah to the exclusion of all other people, then express your desire for death, if you are true. [6] And they will never express this desire, because of what their hands have sent ahead. And Allah is fully aware of the wrongdoers. [7] Say, "Indeed, the death from which you (try to) run away has to visit you, then you will be sent back to the Knower of the unseen and the seen, and He will tell you what you used to do. [8]

Commentary

يُسَبِّحُ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ (All that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth proclaim the purity of Allah,...62:1) Surahs of the Qur'an that begin with 'sabbaha' or 'yusabbihu' [proclaiming Allah's purity] are called *Musabbihāt*, in all of which it is established that everything in the heaven and earth proclaims the purity of Allah.

That all creatures in the heavens and the earth declare the purity of Allah in a symbolic way is understandable. Everyone may understand that every single particle created by Allah bears testimony to the wisdom and power of the Wise Creator in their circumstantial language, which is their *tasbīh* (proclamation). However, the fact is that, every thing proclaims *tasbīh* in its real sense in its own way, because Allah has bestowed some sort of sense and perception to every particle of this universe, even to stones and trees, according to their ability. Since the first demand upon sense and perception is to recognize its Creator and Maker, and glorify Him, therefore, it is not far-fetched to conceive that

everything in nature really declares the purity of Allah in its own peculiar language, though human ears might not be able to hear it. Thus the Qur'ān on one occasion says: وَلَكِنْ لَا تَفْقَهُونَ تَسْبِيحَهُمْ (...but you do not understand their extolling ...[17:44] At the commencement of most Surahs called *Musabbiḥāt* the past indefinite tense *sabbaha* is employed. Only at the beginning of Sūrah Al-Jumu'ah and At-Taghābun the present form *yusabbiḥu* is used. The different forms at the beginning of different Surah have fresh rhetorical elegance and refinement. The past tense connotes certitude, and therefore mostly this tense has been used. The present form connotes continuity, which is employed in two places for this purpose.

هُوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ (He is the One who raised amidst the unlettered people a messenger from among themselves...62:2) The word *ummiyyin* is the plural of *ummiyy*, which denotes 'unlettered'. The Arabs were known by this title, because they did not know how to read and write. Very few of them had the knowledge of reading and writing. The Arabs in this verse are specially referred to in order to express the great power of Allah. The Holy Prophet ﷺ is also sent amongst them, who is himself unlettered. The duties and reformative functions of a Prophet [as set out in the forthcoming verse] are based on knowledge and education. These reforms are such that no unlettered individual can ever teach them, nor is it possible for an unlettered nation to learn. It was only through the Divine Supreme Power and the miracle of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ that when these reforms started, great scholars, intellectuals, men of letters, savants and sages were born among the unlettered people, and their knowledge, wisdom, sagacity and erudition was recognized by the entire world.

The Three Objectives of the Advent of the Prophet ﷺ

يَتْلُوا عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ (...to recite His verses to them, and to make them pure, and to teach them the Book and the Wisdom....62:2) In the context of the Divine blessings bestowed to the mankind, three qualities of the Holy Prophet ﷺ have been mentioned. One, to recite the verses of the Qur'ān to his Ummah. Two, to purify them of all the outer and inner defilements. This includes outer purification that relates to one's body and dress, and also the inner purification that relates to one's faith, actions and moral attitude. Three, to teach the Book

and the wisdom. These three factors are Divine blessings to the mankind on the one hand, and these are the basic objectives and the terms of reference of the Holy Prophet ﷺ for which he was sent to this world.

يَتْلُوا عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ (...to recite His verses to them) The word *tilāwah* lexically signifies 'to follow, to obey' but in the terminology of the Qur‘ān, it signifies 'recitation or reading of the Divine Words'. The word *‘āyāt* refers to the verses of the Qur‘ān. The prepositional phrase *‘alaihim* [to them] signifies that one of the objectives or duties of the Prophet ﷺ is to recite the verses of the Qur‘ān to the people.

In the current verse, the second objective of the Holy Prophet ﷺ is to: يُزَكِّيهِمْ (make them pure) which is derived from *tazkiyah* and it means 'to make pure'. Often it is used exclusively for inner cleanliness, that is, to be free from such inner adulterating matter as *kufr*, *shirk* and free from inner moral defilement. But occasionally, it is used in the general sense of both outer and inner cleanliness. Probably, in this context it is used in the general sense of the term.

يُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ (...to teach them the Book and the Wisdom...62:2) The word *al-Kitāb* refers to the Holy Qur‘ān, and the word *al-ḥikmah* refers to all the teachings and guidance that have been received from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ orally or practically. As a result, many of the commentators have interpreted the word *ḥikmah* as the Approved Way [Sunnah of the Holy Prophet ﷺ].

A Question and its Answer

A question arises here that the natural order of wording in the verse should have been thus: [1] recitation or teaching of words; followed by [2] teaching of meaning; and consequently [3] making pure by inculcating righteous deeds and high morals. However, in most places the Qur‘ān has changed the sequence by inserting '[3] *tazkiyah* or making pure' between '[1] *tilāwah* (recitation) and '[2] *ta‘līm* (teaching). Rūḥ-ul-Ma‘ānī explains that if the natural order of wording were to be maintained in all verses, all three elements would have combined together and become 'one', as it happens in pharmaceutical mixing of many substances, the aggregate of which loses the separate identity of each element, and becomes a single 'compound' whereas probably Allah wanted to maintain separate identities of the Divine blessings and the three Prophetic duties separately

identifiable. By changing the natural order in most places, the Holy Qur'an has probably alluded to this fact.

Please see Ma'arif-ul-Qur'an Vol. 1/pp 331-343, under the Surah Al-Baqarah Verse 129, for fuller explanation of this verse.

(...And [this Messenger is sent also] to others of them who did not join them so far. And He is the All-mighty, the All-wise...62:3) The word '*ākharīn*' means 'other people' and the phrase لَمَّا يَلْحَقُوا بِهِمْ means 'those people who have not yet joined the unlettered people'. This refers to all those Muslims who will enter the fold of Islam until the Last Hour [as transmitted by Ibn Zaid, Mujāhid and others]. This indicates that the succeeding generations of Muslims will be appended to the earlier generations of believers, that is, the noble Companions. This is great good news for the succeeding generations of Muslims. [Rūḥ].

Grammatically, there are two views regarding the conjoining of the word '*ākharīn*'. One view holds that it is conjoined to *ummiyyīn* and it means that 'Allah has sent his Messenger among the unlettered people and also among those who have not yet joined them'. Sending the Prophet among the present unlettered people is quite obvious, but 'sending him among those who have not yet come' needs explanation. Bayan-ul-Qur'an explains that 'sending among them' stands for 'sending for them' because the preposition *fī* in Arabic is also used in the sense of 'for'. According to some other grammarians, however, the word '*ākharīn*' is conjoined to the objective pronoun *him* attached to the verb *yu'allimu-hum*, in which case the interpretation would be 'the Prophet teaches the unlettered people and also the people who have not joined them so far'. [Maẓharī prefers the latter interpretation].

Sayyidna Abū Hurairah رضي الله عنه narrates, as recorded in Bukhārī and Muslim, that they were sitting in the company of the Holy Prophet ﷺ when Sūrah Al-Jumu'ah was revealed. He recited it to them, and when he reached the verse (...and others of them who have not joined them so far...62:3) they asked him who are these 'others'. He remained silent. They asked him the second time and he remained silent. They asked him the third time, and he put his blessed hand on the back

of Sayyidna Salmān Al-Fārisī ؓ [who was at that time in the gathering] and said: "If faith were on Pleiades, even then some men or a man from these people would attain it." [Maẓharī]. This narration does not specify people of Persia, but it does prove that they are included in the general sense of 'others'. This narration speaks greatly of all non-Arabs who embrace Islam. [Maẓharī].

مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ حُمِّلُوا التَّوْرَةَ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَحْمِلُوهَا كَمَثَلِ الْحِمَارِ يَحْمِلُ أَسْفَارًا (The example of those who were ordered to bear (the responsibility of acting upon) the Torah, then they did not bear it, is like a donkey that carries a load of books...5) The word *asfār* is the plural of *sifr*, which means a 'large book'. The preceding verses described that the Holy Prophet ﷺ was raised up among the unlettered people having three main objectives of his mission. The previous Divine Book Torah described the Holy Prophet ﷺ almost with the same qualities as are described in the Qur'ān, which required that as soon as the Jews saw the Holy Prophet ﷺ, they should have recognized him and believed in him. But the material position and possessions blinded them to the teachings of Torah. Despite their knowledge of Torah, they acted as practical ignoramus. The verse describes their block-headed behaviour with the example of a donkey loaded with weighty tomes. The donkey carries its loads, but it is neither aware of its subject-matter, nor does it benefit by it. Similarly, the Jews carry around the Torah for material gains and to seek position and status among people, but they do not benefit by its guidance.

The Example of a Non-Practicing Scholar

Commentators have stated that the example given by the verse for Jews applies to any religious scholar who does not act upon his knowledge. A Persian poet has put it thus:

نه محقق بود نه دانش مند.....چار پایی بروکتا ہے چند

'He is neither a scholar, nor a knowledgeable person.

He is but an animal of four legs, carrying the load of some books'

قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ هَادَوْا إِن زَعَمْتُمْ أَنكُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ لِلَّهِ مِن دُونِ النَّاسِ فَتَمَنَّوْا الْمَوْتَ إِن كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ

(Say, "O those who are Jews, if you claim that you are the

friends of Allah to the exclusion of all other people, then express your desire for death, if you are true...62:6)

Despite their *kufr*, *shirk* and moral aberration, the Jews claimed نَحْنُ أَبْنَاؤُ اللَّهِ وَأَحِبَّاؤُهُ (...We are the sons of Allah and His favourites) [5:18] and they also claimed لَنْ يَدْخُلَ الْجَنَّةَ إِلَّا مَنْ كَانَ هُودًا (...no one shall ever enter Paradise unless he is a Jew) [2:111] In other words, they believed themselves to be safe and immune from the punishment of the Hereafter, and thought that the blessings of Paradise are their personal property. Obviously, if a person believes that the blessings of the Hereafter are a zillion times better than the blessings of this world, he must, of necessity, wish for death, so that he is able to enter Paradise sooner and start enjoying its blessings forthwith. He sees with his own eyes that this world is not free from miseries, sorrows and hardships and one has to suffer from certain diseases as long as he is living here. Then if he believes that, as soon as he dies, he will certainly receive those numerous and eternal blessings, a wise man should naturally wish for death in his heart, so that he may be set free from this miserable world and reach the next world where he will reside for ever in eternal peace and comfort. That is why the Messenger of Allah ﷺ is instructed in the present verse to challenge the Jews that if they are Allah's children and His beloved ones and they do not have any fear of punishment in the Hereafter, then the reason demands that they should wish for death. Then the Holy Qur'an itself falsified them in the following words:

وَلَا يَتَمَنَّوْنَهُ أَبَدًا بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ (And they will never express this desire, because of what their hands have sent ahead...62:7) In other words, they will not wish for death because of the *kufr* and *shirk* and the evil deeds they have committed . They fully know that there will be nothing for them in the Hereafter but the punishment of Hell. Their claim that they are Allah's children and His loved ones is absolutely false, a claim that they themselves know is false. They make such claims for worldly and material gains. They also know that if they accept the Holy Prophet's ﷺ challenge and invoke death upon themselves, it would be readily accepted and they would die instantly. Being convinced of the falsity of their position, the Jews will refuse to accept the challenge. A Prophetic

Tradition reports that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ has stated that if any one of them at that time had wished for death, he would have died instantly. [Rūh]

Is Longing for Death Permissible?

This subject has been fully discussed in Sūrah Al-Baqarah. Traditions forbid anyone to wish for death. The most important reason behind this is that no one has the right to believe that as soon as he dies, he will certainly enter Paradise and will have no fear of any punishment. Wishing for death in such a state of mind is tantamount to show bravery before Allah.

قُلْ إِنَّ الْمَوْتَ الَّذِي تَفِرُونَ مِنْهُ فَإِنَّهُ مُلْقِيكُمْ (Say, "Indeed, the death from which you [try to] run away has to visit you,...62:8) In other words, the Jews' running away from longing for death despite their aforesaid claim is tantamount to running away from death itself. The Holy Prophet ﷺ is instructed in the verse to tell them that the death from which they are fleeing would inevitably catch up with them. If that would not happen instantly, it would certainly happen sometime later. Thus it is impossible for anyone to avoid or avert death in any way.

Laws pertaining to Avoiding the Causes of Death

There are many normal causes of death, from which both reason and Sharī'ah require man to avoid. Once the Holy Prophet ﷺ passed under a bent wall [as if it was about to fall down or collapse] and he passed it quickly, lest it should fall down or collapse on him. Likewise, if fire breaks out at some place, both reason and Sharī'ah dictate that one should run away from there. These circumstances of fleeing from death do not fall under fleeing from death denounced in the above verse, if our faith is sound and we believe that when the predetermined time of our death will approach, we will not be able to escape. Since we do not know for sure whether fire, or poison, or some other obnoxious thing will be the destined cause of our death in a particular situation, running away from them would not amount to fleeing from death that is denounced in the verse.

As far as bubonic plague or epidemic is concerned, it is a separate issue. The details appear in books of jurisprudence and Ḥadīth which may be consulted. The author of Rūḥ-ul-Ma'ānī has on this occasion discussed

this issue exhaustively and clarified it to a great degree. Some of its details have already been given in this book under the verses 2:243 to 244. See vol. 1, pp. 619-622.

Verses 9 - 11

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا نُودِيَ لِلصَّلَاةِ مِنْ يَوْمِ الْجُمُعَةِ فَاسْعَوْا إِلَى
ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَذَرُوا الْبَيْعَ ۚ ذَلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٩﴾ فَإِذَا
قُضِيَتِ الصَّلَاةُ فَانْتَشِرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَابْتَغُوا مِنْ فَضْلِ اللَّهِ
وَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٠﴾ وَإِذَا رَأَوْا تِجَارَةً أَوْ لَهْوً
انْفَضُّوا إِلَيْهَا وَتَرَكُوكَ قَائِمًا ۚ قُلْ مَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ مِنَ اللَّهْوِ وَمِنَ
التِّجَارَةِ ۚ وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ الرَّازِقِينَ ﴿١١﴾

O you who believe, when the call for *ṣalāh* (prayer) is proclaimed on Friday, hasten for the remembrance of Allah, and leave off business. That is much better for you, if you but know. [9] Then once the *ṣalāh* is finished, disperse in the land, and seek the grace of Allah. And remember Allah much, so that you may be successful. [10] And when they see some merchandise or amusement, they break away to it, and leave you standing. Say, "What is with Allah is much better than the amusement and the merchandise, and Allah is the best giver of sustenance." [11]

Commentary

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا نُودِيَ لِلصَّلَاةِ مِنْ يَوْمِ الْجُمُعَةِ فَاسْعَوْا إِلَى ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَذَرُوا الْبَيْعَ

O you who believe, when the call for *ṣalāh* (prayer) is proclaimed on Friday, hasten for the remembrance of Allah, and leave off business....[62:9]

The Arabic word for Friday is 'Yaum-ul-Jumu'ah' and is so called because it is the day of congregation for Muslims. Allah created the heavens, the earth and the entire universe in six days, and Friday was the last day when the creation was completed. Prophet 'Ādam عليه السلام was created on that day; he was admitted into Paradise on that day; he was

sent down to the earth on that day; the Last Hour or the Day of Resurrection will occur on that day; and on the same day there is a moment when supplications are readily accepted. All this is established on the authority of authentic Traditions. [Ibn Kathīr]

Allah had appointed Friday as the day of congregation and festivity for the people, but the previous nations were not fortunate enough to appoint it as their sacred day. The Jews regarded Saturday as their day of congregation. The Christians made Sunday their day of congregation. Allah gave this Ummah the ability to elect Friday as their day of congregation. [as transmitted by Bukhārī and Muslim on the authority of Abū Hurairah ؓ as quoted by Ibn Kathīr]

During the Days of Ignorance, Friday was known as 'Yaum-ul-'Arubah'. The first Arab to change the name of this day to 'Yaum-ul-Jumu'ah' was Ka'b Ibn Lu'ayy. The Quraish used to gather or congregate on this day, and Ka'b ibn Lu'ayy used to deliver his sermon. This happened 560 years before the advent of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Ka'b Ibn Lu'ayy was among the Holy Prophet's ﷺ forefathers. Even during the Days of Ignorance, Allah had kept him away from idol worship and granted him the ability to believe in the Oneness of Allah. He had also given people the glad tidings of the advent of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. His greatness among Quraish may be judged from the fact that the year of his death, which occurred 560 years before the Holy Prophet ﷺ, was marked as the new calendar era for computation of dates. In Arabia, at first the calendar era was established when Ka'bah was built and dates were computed accordingly. Then Ka'b Ibn Lu'ayy's death marked another era, and the dates were computed on that basis. When the Event of the Elephant occurred in the year of the birth of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, that set in a new era of Arab calendar, and the dates were computed accordingly. In sum, the importance of 'Yaum-ul-Jumu'ah' had been recognized in Arabia before Islam in the time of Ka'b Ibn Lu'ayy, to whom is ascribed the naming of the day as 'Yaum-ul-Jumu'ah'. [Maḥzarī] According to some narrations, the Ansar of Madīnah used to gather and pray, before migration, on Friday before Jumu'ah prayer became obligatory, and they organized this on the basis of their own *Ijtihād* (assessment). [as transmitted by Abd-ur-Razzāq with an authentic chain of

narrators on the authority of Muḥammad Ibn Sīrīn, as quoted by Maḏharī]

إِذَا نُودِيَ لِلصَّلَاةِ مِنْ يَوْمِ الْجُمُعَةِ (...when the call for salah (prayer) is proclaimed on Friday, hasten for the remembrance of Allah, and leave off business ...62:9) The word *nidā'* refers to *adhān* or call for prayer. In the sentence فَاسْعَوْا إِلَى ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ (...hasten to Allah's remembrance...) the word *sa'y* means to 'run or rush' as well as to 'take care of a task consciously'. In this context, the word is used in the latter sense, because the Holy Prophet ﷺ has prohibited to go to prayer running or walking quickly. He said when anyone hears the *iqāmah*, he should proceed to offer the prayer with calmness and dignity. The verse implies that when believers are called to prayer on the Day of Jumu'ah, they should proceed to the remembrance of Allah, that is, they should carefully go to the mosque for Jumu'ah prayer and its Sermon. Just as a person running towards something does not pay heed to anything else, a Muslim should not pay attention, after the call, to anything besides *adhān* and *khuṭbah*. [Ibn Kathīr]. The phrase ذِكْرُ اللَّهِ (...Allah's remembrance...) could refer to Jumu'ah prayer as well as to Jumu'ah Sermon, which is one of the conditions of the validity of Jumu'ah prayer. Therefore, the phrase may most appropriately be interpreted as referring to the package of Jumu'ah prayer and Jumu'ah Sermon. [Maḏharī and others].

وَذَرُوا الْبَيْعَ (...and leave off business...) The literal meaning of the word '*bai*' is 'sale'. Although the intent is to ban all activities of buying and selling, the verse has mentioned 'sale' only, because when one aspect of trading is abandoned, the other aspect would automatically come to an end. If there is no one to sell, there will be no one to buy, because trade is a bilateral transaction..

The verse under comment indicates that the bar on the activities of buying and selling after the *adhān* of Jumu'ah needs to be implemented for practical purposes in such a way that the shops are closed at that particular time, so that all trading activities automatically come to a halt. The underlying wisdom is that there are uncountable number of customers and buyers, and it would not be possible to stop them all. The sellers and shopkeepers, however, are limited and they can be stopped. If they are stopped from selling, the buyers automatically will stop buying. Hence, the verse deemed it sufficient to impose the bar on 'sale'.

Special Note

The purport of the verse is to forbid, after the *adhān* of Jumu'ah, all activities that hamper preparation for Jumu'ah prayer and sermon activities such as trading, agriculture, labour or anything else, - but the Qur'ān mentions only selling. This could imply that only people living in towns and cities are commanded to offer the Jumu'ah prayer, and not the people residing in small villages, rural areas and jungles. Thus activities that are carried out by people in towns and cities, that is, trade activities, have been forbidden. But activities related to land, such as agricultural activities, are generally carried out in rural areas where Jumu'ah prayer is not required. Therefore, such activities are not mentioned here. However, The jurists of the Ummah unanimously agree that the word '*ba*' occurring in the verse does not refer only to 'selling' but to all such activities that can hinder preparing for and proceeding to the Jumu'ah prayer. Thus eating, drinking, sleeping, talking, and even studying are forbidden after Jumu'ah *adhān*. Only activities related to Jumu'ah may be carried out.

Adhān of Jumu'ah

In the beginning, there was only one *adhān* for Jumu'ah, which was called at the time of the Khuṭbah in front of the Imam. This situation existed in the time of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, and this practice continued in the time of Sayyidna Abū Bakr ؓ and 'Umar ؓ. However, the Muslim population grew by leaps and bounds in the time of Sayyidna 'Uthmān ؓ and spread in the outskirts of Madīnah. The *adhān* that was given in front of the Imam at the time of the khuṭbah could not be heard by the large Muslim population in the distance. He therefore initiated another *adhān* that was called in the trading area further from the mosque at his house in az-Zaura', which could be heard throughout Madīnah. None of the noble Companions objected to this. Thus this first *adhān* by consensus of the Companions became instituted. All trading and other activities that were forbidden after the Jumu'ah *adhān* before the Imam are now forbidden after the first *adhān* introduced by Sayyidna 'Uthman ؓ, taking into account the wordings of the Qur'ān نُوْدَىٰ لِلصَّلَاةِ مِنْ يَوْمِ الْجُمُعَةِ (when the call for *ṣalāh* (prayer) is proclaimed on Friday,). Details are available in the canonical collections of Traditions, commentaries and jurisprudence. There is no disagreement on the issue.

There is consensus of the entire Ummah that on Friday Ṣalāt-ul-Jumu'ah shall be performed instead of Ṣalāt-uz-Ḍuhur and there is also consensus that Ṣalāt-ul-Jumu'ah is not like the five daily prayers. There are some additional pre-requisites attached to it. The five daily prayers can be performed individually without congregation, or they could be performed in congregation with only two individuals. Ṣalāt-ul-Jumu'ah, on the other hand, is not valid without congregation. There is disagreement among the jurists about the number of individuals that can constitute a congregation. The five daily prayers may validly be held anywhere, on the sea, ocean, mountains or in the jungles. But Ṣalāt-ul-Jumu'ah on the other hand, is not valid in jungles or deserts according to any of the jurists. It is not obligatory on women, the sickly or the wayfarers. The latter should perform Ḍuhur prayer instead of Jumu'ah. There is disagreement among the jurists about the type of locality where Jumu'ah prayer may be held. According to Imām Shafi'ī, Ṣalāt-ul-Jumu'ah is valid in a habitation where forty free, sane and adult men reside. If there are less than forty such men, it is not valid. According to Imām Mālik, the habitation must be such as to have houses adjacent to one another, and it must also have a bazaar or a market-place. According to Imām Abū Hanīfah رحمه الله تعالى, for Ṣalāt-ul-Jumu'ah to be held validly the following pre-requisites are necessary: The habitation must be a town, city or a very large village which has streets, market places, a Muslim ruler and a judge who can restore the rights of people and decide cases of dispute. This is no occasion to go into details of the issue and proofs thereof. Venerable scholars have written separate books on the topic and clarified the position.

In brief, the generality of the command to attend Ṣalāt-ul-Jumu'ah is restricted to a specific sector of the addressees. It is not obligatory on every members of the Muslim community, but for it to be compulsory, there are some conditions and pre-requisites. The disagreement exists only in identifying the pre-requisites. But where the pre-requisites apply and Ṣalāt-ul-Jumu'ah becomes obligatory according to any school of thought, it is very important to observe it, and there is grave warnings for those who neglect it without any valid reason in terms of Shari'ah. On the other hand, there is a promise of great reward and blessings for those who offer it fulfilling all its conditions and pre-requisites.

Blessings in Business after Jumu‘ah

فَإِذَا قُضِيَتِ الصَّلَاةُ فَانْتَشِرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَابْتَغُوا مِنْ فَضْلِ اللَّهِ (Then once the *ṣalāh* is finished, disperse in the land, and seek the grace of Allah...62:10). The preceding verses prohibited trading and all other worldly activities, after the *adhān* of Jumu‘ah. The present verse permits those activities after the Jumu‘ah prayer is over; we are allowed to spread throughout the land in search of our livelihood and sustenance.

When Sayyidna ‘Irāk Ibn Mālīk ﷺ finished his Jumu‘ah prayer, he would come out and, standing on the threshold of the mosque, he would pray:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّىْ اَجَبْتُ دَعْوَتَكَ وَصَلَّيْتُ فَرِيضَتَكَ وَانْتَشَرْتُ كَمَا اَمَرْتَنِىْ فَاَرْزُقْنِىْ مِنْ فَضْلِكَ وَاَنْتَ خَيْرُ الرَّازِقِيْنَ. (رواه ابن ابى حاتم، از ابن كثير)

"O Allah, I responded to Your call and performed the Salah which You have prescribed for me as an obligation, and I am going out as You have commanded me in search of livelihood. So, grant me my livelihood out of Your grace. And You are the best giver of sustenance." [Transmitted by Ibn Abī Ḥātim, as quoted by Ibn Kathīr]. Some of the righteous elders have reported that anyone who performs his trading activities after Jumu‘ah, Allah will grant him blessings seventy folds. [Ibn Kathīr]

It is reported from the righteous elders that whoever carries out his commercial activities after the prayer of Jumu‘ah is favoured by Allah with seventy blessings. (Ibn Kathīr)

وَادْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا لَّعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ (And remember Allah much, so that you may be successful - 62:10). It means that commercial activities are though allowed after the prayer, one should not neglect Allah's remembrance during these activities as the infidels do. Even during such activities one must remain mindful of Allah and His remembrance.

Admonishing those who abandon the Imām while he is delivering the Jumu‘ah Khuṭbah [Sermon]

وَإِذَا رَأَوْا تِجَارَةً أَوْ لَهْوًا انفَضُّوا إِلَيْهَا وَتَرَكُوكَ قَائِمًا قُلْ مَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ مِنَ اللَّهِو
وَمِنَ التِّجَارَةِ وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ الرَّازِقِينَ

And when they see some merchandise or amusement, they

break away to it, and leave you standing. Say, "What is with Allah is much better than the amusement and the merchandise, and Allah is the best giver of sustenance." (62:11)

The verse admonishes those who once abandoned the Friday sermon and attended some trade activity. Imām Ibn Kathīr says that this incident took place when the Holy Prophet ﷺ used to deliver the Friday sermon after the Jumu'ah prayer, as it happens on 'Īdain even in our days. It once happened that the Friday prayer had finished and the Holy Prophet ﷺ was delivering his sermon. Suddenly a trading caravan arrived in the market-place of Madīnah. Drums were beaten to announce the arrival of the caravan. The Friday prayer had finished and the sermon was in progress. Many of the noble Companions went away to the market-place. Only a few of them had remained behind with the Holy Prophet ﷺ who were about twelve in number [according to a narration in Marāsīl of Abū Dāwūd]. According to some narratives, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "If all had gone, the entire valley of Madīnah would have been filled with the fire of punishment". [Transmitted by Abū Ya'lā, as quoted by Ibn Kathīr].

Muqatil, the leading scholar of Qur'ānic commentary, says that this was the trading caravan of Diḥyah Ibn Khalaf Kalbī, which had come from Syria. This caravan normally came to Madīnah with all the essentials, especially essential foodstuff. Whenever it arrived in Madīnah, and the people came to know about it, men and women all rushed towards it. Diḥyah Ibn Khalaf was not a Muslim until then. He became a Muslim later on.

Ḥasan al-Baṣrī and Abū Mālīk said that that was a time when there was scarcity and dearth of things. [Maḥzarī]. There were several factors on account of which a large group of the blessed Companions left the mosque when they heard the sound of the caravan. First, the *fard* prayer had already finished, and they did not know until then the status of the Friday sermon whether it was part of the *fard* prayer. Second, there was scarcity and dearth of essential goods and items. Third, buyers would rush to the caravan and they feared that if they did not make it in time, they would not be able to obtain their essentials. As a result, the noble Companions committed the mistake and the above Tradition sounded a warning, that is, if all of them had gone the Divine punishment would

have overtaken them. The current verse إِذَا رَأَوْا تِجَارَةً was revealed to admonish them and put them to shame. For this reason, the Holy Prophet ﷺ, since that day, changed the order of Friday sermon and prayer, delivering the sermons before the prayer. This is now the approved way [Sunnah]. [Ibn Kathīr]

The verse under comment instructs the Holy Prophet ﷺ to tell the people that what is with Allah is better than the merchandise and amusement of this world, that is, the reward of the Hereafter. It is not far-fetched to conceive that people who forsake business and earning of livelihood for the sake of prayer and sermon will attract ample blessings in their provision from Allah, even in this world, as was cited earlier from the righteous elders on the authority of Ibn Kathīr.

Alḥamdulillah
The Commentary on
Sūrah Al-Jumu‘ah
Ends here.